

White Hall Academy working with Child Therapy Service

White Hall's SEN and Pastoral Support Team started working with the Child Therapy Service in September 2021, for supporting the increased need of emotional and mental health needs of the pupils. White Hall Academy is a primary school, with a Nursery, in a recognised area of deprivation. There are a large number of pupils who have experienced a high number of Adverse Childhood Experiences and require additional support for social, emotional and mental health needs.

The school accessed the following support from CTS:

- Initial consultation to discuss the needs of the school and children
- Access to a Grounding support programme including assessment tool, activities, and advice for supporting parents and staff understanding to enable the project to succeed through a whole school approach
- Ongoing termly review consultation sessions
- Access to parent support groups
- Access to parent individual consultation sessions
- Access to resources

The CTS project has made a positive impact within the school. The Grounding project involved identifying key children who could benefit from these daily activities. The school used an assessment tool, provided by CTS, was completed by the teachers of 36 children with SEMH needs.

NAME OF CHILD	LEVEL 1			LEVEL 2			LEVEL 3			LEVEL 4			LEVEL 5													
	NERVOUS SYSTEM			SENSORY SYSTEM			SENSORY MOTOR DEVELOPMENT			PERCEPTUAL MOTOR DEVELOPMENT			COGNITIVE INTELLECT													
	Agitated with poor attention	Poor attention, focus and memory	Emotional dysregulation - easily triggered	Exhausted and withdrawn	Controlling behaviours	Tactile defensive (touch)	Poor Vestibular System (balance)	Poor Proprioception (knowing where their bodies are in space)	Visual defensiveness (vision)	Auditory defensiveness (hearing)	Poor Interoception (inner organs)	Poor postural security (unable to prevent falling)	Poor awareness of both sides of the body (bilateral integration)	Poor motor planning (ability to plan their movement)	Poor body scheme (body awareness through movement)	Poor ability to screen sensory input (under or overactive)	Poor auditory language skills (hearing and speaking appropriately)	Poor visual-spatial perception (identifying what is seen in space)	Poor attention center functions (maintaining attention to tasks)	Poor Eye-hand coordination (when they use what they see to guide the movement of their hands)	Poor ocular motor control (locating and fixating on something in their environment)	Poor postural adjustment (adjusting their posture to maintain balance)	Poor behaviour choices	Poor academic Progress	Daily living activities (such as eating, toileting, bathing)	INITIAL ASSESSMENT TOTAL
Scoring: 0 Never, 5 Sometimes, 10 Always - HIGH SCORES INDICATE AN AREA OF DIFFICULTY																										

The scores from these revealed which children the school would target for the intervention, 29 children from Years 1 to 6 including all Children in Care (CiC) pupils were identified as children who scored highly in the first two levels and had need for the daily Grounding intervention. Teachers and LSAs of the target children were provided with the suggested activities and would carry out the intervention 1:1 for 5 minutes each morning on the child's arrival in school. A record monitoring sheet was created for tracking the participation and engagement of pupils.

Grounding Activities: Autumn Term 2021

PUPIL:

CLASS:

Please highlight the days when the Grounding Activities have been carried out e.g.

October 2021							November 2021							December 2021						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
				1	2	3										1	2	3	4	5
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	27	28	29	30	31		
							29	30												

Mark on the date
 GREEN if the activity happened and RED if it didn't

You can use the NOTES section to jot down the reasons for any RED marks e.g. "off ill" and for any other notes you feel are helpful to the intervention

October 2021							November 2021							December 2021						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
				1	2	3										1	2	3	4	5
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	27	28	29	30	31		
							29	30												

NOTES:

The school staff were trained on the intervention to ensure everyone knew the purpose and what it was achieving, the school's SLT were trained first to reinforce the new approach and help spread the positive message to other staff. CiC pupils were identified as benefitting from the intervention through a consultation session with Tracy Chadwick from CTS.

Following two full terms of the intervention, the assessment tool was repeated to examine whether scores had improved as well as qualitative evidence collected through pupil and staff views. The LSAs participating in the intervention were very positive and their feedback displayed an enjoyment of working on these activities with the children.

"He particularly likes the times table one. Sometimes, he prefers to have a quick chat instead, as once he's told someone what he wants to say, he generally settles down. The other children in the class also wanted to be grounded so we let xxx ground them using the breathing activity, during a mindfulness session. I would definitely recommend that others try it." (LSA of a Year 5 child)

"I have been using the grounding activities with xxx and xxx this year. I believe it has helped both children to settle in the class first thing in the morning, to calm them before their learning begins. The grounding activities were easy to use, and, after exhausting the ideas, I adapted my own e.g. looking at pictures describing what's going on, playing noughts and crosses, scribble drawings turning them into pictures, playing kims game, reading their books to me, modelling playdoh amongst other things. It was good to have some pointers and ideas, to adapt and expand on. There was nothing I didn't like about it." (LSA of Year 4 pupil)

"I found the grounding exercises helped a lot with some of the children in my class as it was an opportunity for them to open-up about any worries or issues they have. I tried to do it every day but sometimes it wasn't possible due to other issues or when I was covering PPA. I think maybe there could be a few more grounding activity ideas perhaps, but other than that I'd recommend it." (LSA with Year 2 pupils)

The children's feedback was also positive. They enjoyed working 1:1, they saw it as their special time which helped promote their self-esteem.

"I like drawing as a grounding activity" (Year 5 child)

"I like being 1:1 with the LSA when we do our grounding work." (Year 3 pupil)

The scores from the summer term 2022 showed an increase in most of the assessed pupils.

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	Agitated with poor attention Poor attention, focus and memory Emotional Dysregulation - easily triggered Exhausted and withdrawn Controlling behaviours					Tactile defensive (touch) Poor Vestibular System (balance) Poor Proprioception (knowing where their bodies are in space) Visual defensiveness (vision) Auditory defensiveness (hearing) Poor Interoception (inner organs)					Poor postural security (unable to prevent falling) Poor awareness of both sides of the body (bilateral integration) Poor motor planning (ability to plan their movement) Poor body scheme (body awareness through movement) Poor ability to screen sensory input (under or overreactive)					Poor auditory language skills (hearing and speaking appropriately) Poor visual-spatial perception (identifying what is seen in space) Poor attention center functions (maintaining attention to tasks) Poor Eye-hand coordination (when they use what they see to guide the movement of their hands) Poor ocular motor control (locating and fixating on something in their environment) Poor postural adjustment (adjusting their posture to maintain balance)					Poor behaviour choices Poor academic Progress Daily living activities (such as eating, toileting, bathing)					
Scoring: 0 Never, 5 Sometimes, 10 Always - HIGH SCOREES INDICATE AN AREA OF DIFFICULTY																										
SEPTEMBER 2021	7	5	9	3	6	3	4	5	7	8	3	9	6	6	6	7	8	4	8	6	5	3	9	6	0	143
JULY 2022	6	4	7	1	2	5	2	5	3	7	0	3	5	0	5	5	3	0	6	6	3	0	5	3	0	86

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	Scoring: 0 Never, 5 Sometimes, 10 Always - HIGH SCORES INDICATE AN AREA of DIFFICULTY																									
SEPTEMBER 2021	9	9	8	4	6	7	3	6	3	3	3	8	8	4	3	6	4	5	9	3	3	1	5	5	1	126
JULY 2022	4	4	2	0	5	5	5	0	0	0	2	2	4	4	2	4	0	4	0	0	2	3	3	0	60	

Due to the success of using The Grounding Intervention, the school continued this in the academic year 2022/2023. Grounding activities are used for key children at different points of the day, such as key transition points, as advised by CTS, and this has helped children to feel safe within the school environment.

The termly school consultation sessions have been very helpful and provided advice for supporting high needs children.

Examples of advice following a termly consultation session included:

Advice for when children are dysregulated.

- Use GROUNDING activities timetabled into the day (2 minutes in class, not taking them out)
- Use GROUNDING at the start of each lesson and at key transition points e.g. after breaktimes
- Try calming music at any opportunity.
- Create a Sensory Profile (use Sensory assessment) and put a Sensory Diet in place.
- Put a Sensory Diet in place for them to have timetabled into their day.
- Need to build positive relationship with child to show them you are a consistent, safe adult.

Advice specific to individual cases in Year 1:

- Help them have something in school that represents their safe place.
- Find out what does their safe place look like e.g. is it being wrapped up in a blanket with a cup of hot chocolate
- Look for tactile experiences that can represent this safe place e.g. a small piece of fabric from the soft blanket, a scent spray that reminds them of the safe place, a small picture etc
- Turn the tactile experiences into small reminders that can go into a 'special' box or a drawer in school
- Always end sensory diet with a deep pressure activity to bring themselves back and ready e.g. teach self-bear hug
- Have a visual for Work – Sensory activity – Deep pressure activity – Back to work

The school have gained a lot of useful advice from Tracy Chadwick at the Child Therapy Service which has provided the whole school community with resources, training, and support to improve identified areas of difficulties in SEMH.

Helen Pearce

SENCO

September 2022